

Dear esteemed members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 5653 AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN EXCISE TAX ON AMMUNITION, which seeks to establish an excise tax on ammunition. This bill would place an undue burden on law-abiding gun owners and shooters, while doing little to address the root causes of gun violence. While I recognize the need for sensible measures to reduce gun violence, I believe that HB 5653 is not the right approach. Here are several reasons why:

1. An excise tax on ammunition would unfairly burden law-abiding gun owners and shooters.

As currently proposed, HB 5653 would impose an excise tax on ammunition. This would significantly increase the cost of ammunition for law-abiding gun owners and shooters, many of whom already struggle to afford the necessary supplies for their hobby or profession. While proponents of this bill argue that the tax would help fund programs to reduce gun violence, it is important to note that these programs would likely have little impact if they do not address the root causes of gun violence. Additionally, it is unfair to target law-abiding gun owners and shooters with this tax, as they are not the ones responsible for the majority of gun violence in our communities.

2. An excise tax on ammunition would not effectively reduce gun violence.

While proponents of this bill argue that the excise tax would help fund programs to reduce gun violence, there is little evidence to suggest that such a tax would actually have a significant impact on reducing gun violence. In fact, studies have shown that most gun violence is committed with illegally obtained firearms, which would not be affected by this tax. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that gun violence is a complex issue with many underlying factors. To truly reduce gun violence, we need to address issues such as poverty, mental health, and systemic inequality. Simply imposing a tax on ammunition will not solve these complex issues.

3. An excise tax on ammunition could have unintended consequences.

If HB 5653 were to become law, it could have unintended consequences that could harm law-abiding gun owners and shooters. For example, it could lead to an increase in black market sales of ammunition, which would further undermine efforts to reduce gun violence. Additionally, it could lead to a decrease in participation in shooting sports and other lawful gun-related activities, which would be a blow to the many small businesses that depend on these activities for their livelihood.

4. An excise tax on ammunition is unnecessary given existing regulations and taxes.

It is important to note that there are already numerous regulations and taxes in place that apply to ammunition sales. For example, purchasers of ammunition must be over the age of 21 and must have a valid permit. Additionally, sales of ammunition are subject to state and local sales taxes. Given these existing regulations and taxes, it is difficult to justify the need for an additional excise tax on ammunition. If the goal is to reduce gun violence, we should focus on enforcing existing regulations and investing in programs that address the root causes of gun violence.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to oppose HB 5653. While I recognize the need to reduce gun violence, I believe that this bill is the wrong approach. Instead, we should focus on addressing the root causes of gun violence and enforcing existing regulations. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jason Taylor